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PUBLIC EVENTS.

DURING the last month, our domestic intelligence has been of much greater importance than our foreign news. Connected with the moral improvement of the Caraccas, and forming an era in the eventful life of Joseph Lancaster, we find him employed not merely in forming a school, but "a seminary of school-masters," in that interesting country, which has so long been kept in thralldom by the power of Spain.

Whilst M'Adam, the successful applicant of a long recognized principle in the improvement of roads, (the only novelty in which is the introduction of the graduating ring,) has received a Parliamentary reward, Lancaster, who levelled the byeways of literature, and Bell, who first directed public attention in Britain to the subject of steam navigation, are either left to pine in penury, or labour in expectation.

As the month advanced, we received the final ratification of our commercial relations with the La Plata provinces. Of this document we cannot forbear quoting the Twelfth Article:—

"ART. 12. The subjects of his Britannic Majesty residing in the United Provinces of Rio de la Plata, shall not be disturbed, persecuted, or molested, on account of their religion; but they shall enjoy a perfect LIBERTY OF CONSCIENCE in them, celebrating Divine worship in their own houses, or in their own particular churches and chapels, which they shall be authorized to build and maintain in convenient situations, which shall be approved of by the Government of the said United Provinces. It shall also be permitted to bury the subjects of his Britannic Majesty, who shall die in the territory of the United Provinces, in their own cemeteries, which they may in like manner form and maintain there. On the other hand, the subjects of the said United Provinces shall enjoy, in all the dominions of his Britannic Majesty, a perfect and unlimited freedom of conscience, and the exercise of their religion, public or private, in the houses where they reside, or in the chapels and religious houses destined for that purpose, conformably to the system of toleration established in his Majesty's dominions."

From the accounts received in the course of the month, Spain appears to be in a state of fearful discontent. The continuance of a French force in Spain, must be regarded by the noble and high minded as a galling proof of the political subjugation of that unhappy nation. Their removal may be the signal for civil war and renewed scenes of violence and bloodshed. We

deprecate these occurrences. We have seen too much of them in our native land. Yet there are circumstances in which nations may be said to regenerate themselves: when they throw aside the mass of corruption which has been consolidating for centuries, and dare to walk abroad in the native dignity of rational beings. Ferdinand and the Monks, the embroiderer of petticoats, and his subordinate agents, will in all probability find sufficient employment in taking care of themselves.

Towards the close of the month we learned, from the *Greek Chronicle*, published at Missolonghi, that active preparations were making to resist the projected invasion of Western Greece, under Reddohid Pacha.

Stories of the Greeks being defeated, were fabricated for sinister purposes; and every line of intelligence which had been received from Greece, was such as to brighten the prospects of the friends of liberty. We received, however, the gratifying information, that an engagement had taken place near Navarino, in which the Turks had lost 500 men; and that the Greek army, 10,000 strong, besides 2,000 men in garrison in the town, was within sight of the enemy. A spirit of union, and the 'sinews of war,' are alone required to consummate the independence of Greece.

In a domestic point of view, the question of the Emancipation of our Roman Catholic countrymen may be regarded as the one paramount subject which occupied public attention.

Even at the commencement of the month, a decided opposition, upon the part of the highest subject in the realm, was given to the Bill, which had passed the House of Commons. We differ from those politicians, who deny that the Princes of the Blood should openly express their opinions upon EVERY subject of Parliamentary discussion. This we hold to be their undoubted right. Who can, in so strict a sense of the word, claim the title to be hereditary counsellors of the Crown?

We may, however, question the taste in which opposition to the claims of our Roman Catholic countrymen may be expressed.

Whatever may be the decision to which Parliament may at last come with regard to the Catholic claims, whether the Upper House shall or shall not follow the example of the Lower, still it never can be wished by either House that Parliament should, during a whole reign, be excluded from all power of reviewing its decision, should, in fact, be in so far a mere cypher.

Circumstances might arise of such an imperative nature, that Parliament would have no alternative, but sacrificing the people to the scruples of the Sovereign, or invading a second time the due order of succession. And even if in this dire extremity, the Monarch, by anticipation, should lay aside his scruples, we should then have to endure the mortification of beholding on the Throne, a Prince who had violated the vow which he solemnly called GOD to witness he would never cease to observe.

Under these circumstances, every man who has any regard for the Constitution, of which the two Houses form so important a part (which are in danger of being in abeyance); every man, who feels the least attachment to the Monarchy,—every man who feels gratitude to the House of BRUNSWICK for the peace and prosperity we have enjoyed under their sway,—must wish to see the State freed from so imminent a peril,—must wish to rescue the Sovereign by anticipation from the consequences which, if a remedy be not provided in time, may attach to his rash and extraordinary vow. We trust, therefore, the

Legislature will, while it is yet time, modify the Coronation Oath in such a way, that the most scrupulous King shall be unable to derive from it the slightest difficulty in assenting to the acts of the two Houses.

The Bill, as might have been easily anticipated by an attentive observer of "the signs of the times," was rejected. The majority was greater than had been anticipated:—

The majority in 1821, when the Bill was rejected by the House of Lords, was 89. The number of votes on that occasion, including proxies, was 279. On the present decision the number of votes was 398.

We deprecate Aggregate Meetings, whether weekly or monthly. We fear the intemperate language of a few individuals might be attributed to the body at large. We beseech them to preserve the same moderation which has lately marked their councils, and success must speedily attend their efforts to regain their indubitable privileges as men and citizens. Let them follow "the things which make for peace," and let their motto be "nil desperandum."

LITERARY AND SCIENTIFIC INTELLIGENCE.

BELFAST NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY.

THE fourth yearly Meeting of this Society, was held on Thursday evening, the 26th May, when an address was read by the President, the Rev. THOS. D. HINCKS, of the Belfast Institution. This Society was formed by some young gentlemen, under the auspices of Dr. Jas. L. Drummond, Professor of Anatomy and Natural History, in the Belfast Institution, and has gone on gaining strength in each succeeding year. During the first year, the Meetings were held at the house of D. Drummond, and afterwards in the Manager's room at the Institution. They are now held in a room, rented by the Society, in the Commercial Buildings, which is fitted up in a suitable manner; and adjoining to which is another room, in which their collection is kept for the inspection of the Members and Visitors. At present the number of ordinary Members is about twenty, mostly young active men, ardent in the pursuit of some branch of Natural History. There are also a few visiting Members, who contribute to the funds, though they do not prepare papers. The meetings are held once a fortnight, and each ordinary Member in rotation reads a paper on Zoology, Botany, Mineralogy, or the Topography of Ireland. To illustrate the Natural History of Ireland, and to describe the animals, plants, and minerals, found in it, is the primary object, but the

greater number of the communications hitherto, have been rather compilations of interesting information, from various authors of credit. After the reading of the paper, it becomes the subject of discussion, each Member and Visitor being called on by the President in succession. Such Meetings have an evident tendency to improve the mind, and to form a taste for Natural History; and experience has proved that many, who begin with compiling, become valuable contributors of their own observations.—The President's address, contained a review of the papers read in the preceding Session, twenty-four in number. Five of these were on Mineralogy, three on Botany, four on Topography, and the remaining twelve on some branch of Zoology. Seven were immediately directed to the Natural History of Ireland, and consisted chiefly of original observations. The President also noticed the most remarkable information on each branch which had been communicated through other societies, or published works in the preceding year. In the course of his address, he read a correspondence, commenced with the American Geological Society, of which Professor Silliman is an active Member, through the exertions of Mr. James M'Adam, and gave an account of the addition already made to the Mineralogical collection, in consequence of this intercourse. Many other topics